

# **CHARACTER FIRST!® AT BONITA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP**

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An applied research project submitted to the National Fire Academy  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Bonita Fire Department has a traditional fire-training program that utilizes a command and control or a tactical, strategic method for mitigation of emergencies. The problem addressed was that the monthly or annual training lacked any aspect of ethical or moral personal character development training. An evaluative and action method was used for this applied research project. The following questions guided the research.

1. What are the current training programs for employees at Bonita Fire Department?
2. Are there any character-based standards or models that can be used for training fire service personnel?
3. Can a morally based character-training program be provided at Bonita Fire Department to develop future fire service executive leaders?
4. How are other like-sized and adjacent fire departments building character into their employees for future executive leadership?

A questionnaire/survey was sent to 60 fire department Training Officers similar in size and resident population to Bonita Fire Department. An identical questionnaire and survey was given to 164 professionally trained and highly motivated firefighters that Bonita Fire Department trained with on a monthly and annual basis. Both questionnaire/surveys asked the respondents to rate character qualities they thought were needed in fire officers, in order of importance. Also asked were questions related to ethics and moral training in their fire departments. Moral and ethical character qualities were selected by both survey groups as the most important for fire officer standards. The questionnaire/survey results also indicated that moral/ethical character development was not a topic of regular monthly or annual training for 70% of the departments surveyed.

This research showed that positive character quality development was needed in all areas of the public and private sector, fire service included. All age groups have lost the sense of a moral compass and stated in large numbers that there are no set standards for right or wrong. The fire service reflected the attitudes and problems of the general population and also suffered from lack of moral and ethical standards.

Few character development programs were found that emphasized personal accountability. Most management or leadership development programs focused on strategies, techniques, models, or people as human resources for task accomplishment.

Character First!® is a corporate character quality program that was developed by Tom Hill, Chief Executive Officer of Kimray, Inc. Mr. Hill found a unique way of encouraging employees to develop good character quality, make decisions and act according to good character.

The United States Air Force and Navy currently are training more than 8,000 personnel with the Character First!® program. Businesses across the nation, having applied the Character First!® principles, have changed employee behavior, benefiting the employer through limited sick leave use, increased job satisfaction, and major reductions in workers' compensation abuse. Using Character First!® materials, an agreed upon character quality is selected each month by management leaders. *Character Bulletins* are distributed among employees with the monthly character quality explaining the definition and other pertinent information. Any employee observed applying the monthly character quality is recognized and praised by management through certificates and, in some situations with a monetary reward.

This research indicated that the Character First!® program would benefit Bonita Fire Department, and any other fire department, by enhancing employee contentment, creativity, loyalty, initiative, self-control, enthusiasm, dependability, alertness, and others of the other 49 character qualities emphasized by Character First!®. Character First!® training at Bonita Fire Department can potentially raise all personnel to a higher level of service, commitment, and individual accountability, both professionally and personally.

It was recommended that a person be selected by the Fire Chief for training in the methods of Character First!® and the program be initiated as soon as possible.

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## INTRODUCTION

Bonita Fire Department is located 12 miles South of San Diego, California. The community of Bonita, with nearly 15,000 residents, is an unincorporated semi-rural area of San Diego County. The majority of emergency responses are medical in nature; fires, rescues, public assistance, false alarms, and hazardous condition calls make up the remaining routine activities. Bonita Fire Department also has an automatic aid contract with 4 adjacent cities. The population of the automatic aid areas is over 200,000.

The problem at Bonita Fire Department is that the multi-dimensional training that emergency personnel receive, excellent and up-to-date as it is, does not address moral or ethical character development for individuals. The topics of loyalty, truthfulness, punctuality, compassion, patience, moral integrity, or self-control, to name only a few, have never been discussed as training objectives. Yet, these topics should be at the core of training in order to enhance public perception of fire service personnel; the passed down fiduciary trust inherited from fire service personnel of days past.

The purpose of this applied research project is to evaluate the need for an on-going character based training program from new-hire through executive fire officer at Bonita Fire Department. Following this evaluation, an assessment will be made from research to determine the most effective program(s), and/or training method(s) available. These will be evaluated to determine if they can be used effectively at Bonita Fire Department or other fire departments that may see a need for developing a character based training program.

The information gathered during this research project will be submitted to the Fire Chief. Hopefully, implementation of a character based training program will be put into practice based on the information supplied from this effort.

The methodology used will be evaluative and action for concluding recommendations. The questions to be answered for this project will be:

1. What are the current training programs for employees at Bonita Fire Department?
2. Are there any character-based standards or models that can be used for training fire service personnel?
3. Can a morally based character-training program be provided at Bonita Fire Department to develop future fire service executive leaders?
4. How are other like-sized and adjacent fire departments building character into their employees for future executive leadership?

The questions stated above emerge from the Executive Leadership course of the National Fire Academy as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program. Selected sections of the Executive Leadership class presented during the two week course emphasize developing future leaders through various leadership techniques that are not currently being taught or practiced at Bonita Fire Department (NFA, 1998). Unit 3 in the Executive Leadership Course titled 'Developing Self as A Leader' introduces ethics and moral decision making during class lecture. Because this concept has never been a part of training in Bonita Fire Departments' history, a realistic on-going character development training plan can be organized and implemented for current employees and future leaders at Bonita Fire Department. This could create a more harmonious work environment that



would be beneficial not only to the employees, but enhance public perception of the trust that has historically been associated with the fire service.

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Employees hired in the past at Bonita Fire Department were trained in a learn-as-you-go method. Hose lays and basic medical training were about the only monitored instruction given. Those hired in recent years are better prepared to enter the fire service, but the vast majority of today's fire training and education still focuses on the "command and control" type situations. Safety to personnel, minimizing health hazards, and mitigation of emergency incidents with minimal property loss are the premiere points for all training.

The Training Officer organizes training for Bonita Fire Department. Shift Captains are responsible to carry out the monthly drills, or directions, from the Training Officer. In addition, monthly In Service Training (IST) is conducted in a classroom setting, with some manipulative exercises, covering all situations that emergency personnel may encounter during working hours. Topics for IST cover recertification for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), incident command procedures for structure fires both small and large, confined space rescue, swift water rescue, communicable disease hazards, hazardous materials incidents, drivers' training, and many more. To date none of the topics for training have actually addressed moral and ethical issues relating to individuals.

Training skills for the positions of Bonita Firefighter through Company Officer are now regulated through the California State Fire Marshal's Office (CSFM). Within the CSFM, the California State Board of Fire Services (Training Division) has a

certification track for everything within the fire service, from Chief Officers, Company Officers, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), driver/operators, hazardous materials specialists, arson investigators, instructors, fire inspectors, and fire apparatus mechanics (CSFM, 1998/Appendix A). Bonita Fire Department recognizes this training, but incorporates only selected portions of it into promotional requirements for the positions of Firefighter through Company Officer (Captain) (Appendix B). Community colleges in San Diego County offer Fire Science curriculum that is also recognized as promotional requirements for Bonita Fire Department employees. Again, ethics or moral character development and training are not offered.

Bonita Fire Department is governed by a set of *Rules and Regulations* that are typical of most fire departments. The areas of honesty, work ethics, loyalty, and a sense of duty are written into these rules and regulations. The employees are expected to obey and follow the *Rules and Regulations* or be faced with disciplinary action that could include termination. Overall, the employees at Bonita Fire Department have displayed high ethical standards. This station, with 12 employees offers opportunities for close bonding for most of the men. Complacency, increases in age, added responsibilities, poor leadership in key positions, or lack of promotions can negatively influence personal work habits and positive character development training in these areas of moral and ethical character development has been omitted and neglected.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In a survey of 1,324 workers, forty-eight percent admitted to unethical or illegal acts on the job. The top 10 factors that could trigger workers to act this way were balancing work and family, poor internal communications, **poor leadership**, work

hours/load, **lack of management support**, need to meet goals/budget/sales, **little or no recognition of achievement**, company politics, financial worries, and insufficient resources (emphasis added) (Parker, 1997). These same workers also admitted to cutting corners on quality, covering up incidents, abusing or lying about sick days, and lying or deceiving customers all within the past year. Nearly two in three adults believe ethics “vary by situation” or that there is no “unchanging ethical standard of right and wrong” (Carey and Mullins, 1997).

“Ethics” is defined in Webster’s *New World Dictionary of the American Language* as “the system or code of morals of a particular philosopher, religion, group, etc.” (Guralnik, 1958). Jacques P. Thiroux gives the definition of ethics in his book *Ethics Theory and Practice* as “an individual’s character traits (honesty, compassion, courage, etc.) as they related to the moral (good, right, proper, etc.) aspect of relations with others” (Folisi, 1995). More precisely, the original edition of Noah Webster’s Dictionary of 1828 defines ethics as “The doctrines of morality or social manners; the science of moral philosophy, which teaches men their duty and the reasons of it. 2. A system of moral principles; a system of rules for regulating the actions and manners of men in society” (Slater, 1987). One’s ethics are dictated by one’s morals.

“Moral” is defined as “relating to, dealing with, or capable of distinguishing between, right and wrong in conduct; of teaching, or in accordance with, the principles of right and wrong” (Guralnik, 1958). Webster’s 1828 definition of “moral” is:

Relating to the practice, manners or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, and with reference to right and wrong. The word *moral* is applicable to actions that are good or evil, virtuous or vicious, and has reference to the law of

God as the standard by which their character is to be determined. The word, however, may be applied to actions which affect only, or primarily and principally, a person's own happiness (Slater, 1987).

The word "character", as it is related to both ethics and morals, was best defined and described in Webster's 1828 Edition:

The peculiar qualities impressed by nature or habit on a person, which distinguish him from others; these constitute *real character*, and the qualities, which he is supposed to possess, constitute his *estimated character*, or reputation. Hence we say, a *character* is not formed, when the person has not acquired stable and distinctive qualities" (Slater, 1987).

In Alan Brunacini's book, *Essentials for Fire Department Customer Service*, his number 2 opportunity for displaying good customer service is "Always be nice – treat everyone with respect, kindness, patience, and consideration" (Brunacini, 1997). These words are descriptive of character qualities that some people are inclined to exhibit. Other people must be taught and continually refreshed and some may never be able to become customer friendly. Mr. Brunacini continues with 7 other customer service opportunities that all focus on the individual exhibiting some character quality that emphasizes others instead of oneself. Listed below are all 8 of his basic essentials for fire department customer service opportunities:

- Our essential mission and number one priority is to deliver the best possible service to our customers.
- Always be nice – treat everyone with respect, kindness, patience, and consideration.

- Always attempt to execute a standard problem-solving outcome: quick/effective/skillful/safe/caring/managed.
- Regard everyone as a customer.
- Consider how you and what you are doing looks to others.
- Don't disqualify the customer with your qualifications.
- Basic organizational behavior must become customer-centered.
- We must continually improve our customer service performance (Brunacini, 1997).

The Boy Scouts of America have an oath that includes obeying the Scout Law. The Scout Law says, "A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent" (BSA, 1998). Each of these traits are so important that every fire service person should work toward internalizing them, not only those in leadership positions (Mozingo, 1998).

A more thorough look into the Scout Law defines these character traits:

- Trustworthy – tells the truth and keeps promises. Honesty is part of a code of conduct; whereas, people can depend on you.
- Loyal – be true to your family, leaders, friends, school, and nation.
- Helpful – be concerned about other people and do things willingly for others without reward.
- Friendly – be a friend to all. Seek to understand others and respect those with ideas and customs other than your own.
- Courteous – be polite to everyone regardless of your age or position. Always exhibit good manners.

- Kind – understand there is strength in being gentle. Treat others as you would want to be treated. Do not hurt or kill harmless things without reason.
- Obedient – follow the rules of your family. Obey the laws of your community and country. If you think these rules and laws are unfair, try to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them.
- Cheerful – always look on the bright side of things. Cheerfully do the task(s) that come your way. Try to make others happy.
- Thrifty – work to pay your way and help others. Save for unforeseen needs, protect and conserve natural resources, and carefully use time and property.
- Brave – face danger even if you are afraid. Have the courage to stand for what you think is right even if others laugh at you or threaten you.
- Clean – keep your body and mind fit and clean. Associate with those who believe in living by these same ideals. Keep your home and community clean.
- Reverent – be reverent toward God. Be faithful in your religious duties and respect the beliefs of others (Mozingo, 1998).

These 12 points can be considered the key to great leadership when put into consistent practice. The Scouts have been forming great leaders for many years by focusing on these character qualities.

Many leadership authorities in numerous books and articles point out the necessity of these character traits for being an effective leader and employee. Ken Blanchard's essay on *Turning the Organizational Pyramid Upside Down* writes about being a servant to those who are serving you (Blanchard, 1996). James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Pozner, in the same book, *Leaders of the Future*, list shared values of

developing personal effectiveness, high levels of loyalty, ethical behavior, teamwork, and esprit de corps (Kouzes and Pozner, 1996). Stephen Covey possibly summarizes it best by saying, “Leaders of the future will have the courage to align with principles and go against the grain of old assumptions or paradigms. It takes tremendous courage and stamina to say, ‘I’m going to align my personal value system, my life-style, my direction, and my habits with *timeless principles*’” (emphasis added) (Covey, 1996).

Confucius stated around 500 B.C., “You don’t preach what you practice until you have practiced what you preach” (French, 1998). Ethics follow the same line of reasoning in that a moral foundation must be set before a true ethical standard can be measured. Assistant Fire Chief Dennis Compton, from Phoenix Fire Department, has written an article *Ethics in the Fire Service . . . An Expanded Perspective*. He writes about *contracts* with the external customers, staying ready to respond quickly, being trained and equipped, providing excellent service; he then shifts to the internal customers, the fire fighters, and how they should be as employees and human beings within the Phoenix Fire Department (Compton, 1996). Chief Compton is actually addressing moral character qualities of self-control, enthusiasm, alertness, loyalty, and boldness in his article instead of ethics.

The Woodinville Fire & Life Safety District of Woodinville, Washington assesses their Company Officers for advancement to Shift Commander (Battalion Chief) on principle-centered, ethically based standards that choose time tested and time honored qualities. These qualities included integrity, fairness, kindness, dignity, charity, honesty, patience, and service oriented attitudes (Marzano, 1996).

The value of a moral code of ethics to strengthen employee conduct was researched by Chris Howes of Palm Beach County Fire-Rescue, Palm Beach County, Florida. Howes concluded that a written code of ethics was necessary to focus the employees of Palm Beach County Fire-Rescue on the organization's primary objective – public service/public trust (Howes, 1998). This code of ethics was instituted through department training, recognizing that each person may have some differences in defining ethics or moral absolutes. Nevertheless, an agreed upon list focused all employees to a higher level of service.

The issue of sexual harassment is only one moral dilemma facing not only fire departments but also other mixed gender businesses. In an article by Deborah I. Volberg, in the International Association of Fire Chiefs *On Scene* newspaper, she writes of the liability created when men and women are forced together by the team concept in the fire service (Volberg, 1998). Both men and women must be individually responsible for not allowing harassment to occur. But who defines sexual harassment? The line can be very thin between harassment and good-natured fun.

James T. Steffens, Chief (Retired) states that “a silent concern, unknown to many, has been creeping across the fire service.” During the past several years at least three state training directors have been removed for unethical and/or criminal practices. Numerous local fire officials have also been dismissed or otherwise disciplined for unethical practices. These unethical practices included a Fire Chief being investigated for falsifying Insurance Services Organization (ISO) documentation for their insurance ratings; a Fire Chief terminated for ‘padding’ the cost report to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following a major disaster in his town; and a Chief Officer



who was first warned and then fired for directing department business to a telecommunications firm in which he had a financial interest. (Steffens, 1994).

Core values for the fire service have always been important, including saving lives, reducing property loss, and fire education/safety training for the public. No one will argue these noble goals. The most important core values within each department should be moral and ethical standards. The importance of honesty, integrity, trust, and honoring commitments cannot be understated and absolutely must be listed first. When organizational core values are compromised, the total organization and everyone in it suffers dramatically (Cleveland, 1997).

Recently in the fire service 'Do Not Resuscitate' (DNR) procedures were introduced. These procedures allowed a patient with a terminal illness, pre-arranged through a written and doctor verified document, to have life saving emergency treatment withheld by first arriving emergency personnel. This went against everything emergency workers had been taught – not giving aid to someone in need. The moral or ethical dilemma exists, or is created, when the person with the DNR is unconscious upon arrival and the question is to treat or not to treat? In New York City a woman was treated for cardiac arrest, a pulse was restored, and while the woman was recovering in the hospital a family member asked the paramedics why her mother's DNR was not honored (Hamm, 1997). The woman was still a viable human being and not a true candidate for non-resuscitation, though she had a valid DNR document. Was the daughter looking for a quick inheritance? The paramedics could only answer that they did what they thought was best for the patient. In their opinion, not treating the mother would have been morally wrong.

Captain Ross Swope of the Washington (D.C.) Metropolitan Police Department wrote in an article to the International Association of Police Chiefs of characteristics or virtues that were desirable in police officers, their supervisors and administrators: prudence, justice, intellectual honesty, responsibility, self-effacement or interests and trustworthiness were some of the characteristics law enforcement officers should possess. Taken together, those are called “integrity” (Ballard, 1998). Included in this project is the *Law Enforcement Code of Ethics* that is recognized nation-wide and repeated during most police academy graduations (Hunt, 1990/Appendix C).

In the private sector, the need for moral and ethical standards is also evident. According to Frank Narvan of Narvan Associates, there is more to business ethics than the concerns of the Security or Legal Departments. He lists conflicts of interest, employee theft, overcharges, and using company copiers to make Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) fliers. These issues represent about \$700 per employee per year on average according to a recent ABC television news report on Lying, Stealing and Cheating in America. The bigger story may be that as much as \$7,000 – \$10,000 per employee is lost in unrealized productivity, inferior product quality and customer dissatisfaction every year (Navran, 1996).

A Loyola University (Chicago) study by Al Gini reported sixty-eight percent of people surveyed believed that the unethical behavior of executives is the primary cause of the decline in business standards, productivity, and success. His survey further revealed that because of the perceived low ethical standards of the executive class, workers feel justified in responding in kind through absenteeism, petty theft, indifference, and a generally poor performance on the job. Many workers openly admitted that they spend

more than 20 percent (eight hours per week) of their time at work totally goofing off.

One in six workers surveyed said that they drank or used drugs on the job (Gini, 1998).

Drug abuse on the job is all too common today. The Hazelden Foundation conducted a survey questioning workers about the reasons people use drugs on the job. Sixty-one percent of adults surveyed said they know people who have gone to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The most common reasons for drug abuse on the job were (1) addiction, (2) like the feeling, (3) helped handle stress, (4) bolsters confidence, (5) to be social/acceptance, (6) energy boost, and (7) enhances creativity (Boeck and Mullins, 1997).

Four hundred residents who claimed to have high ethical standards from Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky were polled on cheating and lying by the Josephson Institute and Lousig-Nont & Associates. A significant number (45%-60%) say that they are not always honest at the office in one way or the other (*The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1997).

Universal human values are recognized worldwide writes Rushworth Kidder in *Public Management Magazine*. He states that values give a foundation for building goals, plans, and business tactics. Character traits such as love, truthfulness, fairness, freedom, unity, tolerance, responsibility, and respect for life were discussed in his article. Mr. Kidder referred to a March 1994 *U.S. News and World Report* poll of 1,000 registered voters that said, "citizens, too, believe overwhelmingly that values (morals) have a place in making of public policy. Our government would be better if policies were more directed by moral values, said 84 percent of the respondents" (Kidder, 1995).

The continuing wars in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia have challenged doctors with moral obligations and dilemmas. Conflicts

arose between commitments to universal medical ethics and loyalty to one's nation.

Colleagues who belonged to the different parties in the conflict, and who previously were collaborating friends, now found themselves forced into opposing positions. Physicians had the moral dilemma to choose between escaping to safety or remaining to give medical care to whomever had need (NMA, 1996).

The question is asked in Ken Folisi's *Teaching Ethics – Can We, Should We?* Mr. Folisi answers by saying ethics can be taught by helping students or employees to first understand their individual character traits and then understand how these traits affect their relations with others (Folisi, 1995).

Frequently corporate leaders have high moral and ethical standards and through the corporation, they want personnel to mirror these personal values; but how can they communicate those values to all employees? Mr. Tom Hill found a unique way to communicate those values. Tom Hill, Chief Operating Officer at Kimray, Inc., a supplier of petroleum and gas equipment in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, developed a program called Character First!® (Hill, 1997). Character First!® establishes a corporate culture that encourages all employees to develop good character and to make decisions and act according to good character.

Mr. Hill has identified seven different perspectives an individual should have when viewing problems. Within each of these perspectives are character qualities to assist in identifying how best to resolve the problem or challenge (Appendix D). There are a total of 49 character qualities; seven character qualities for each perspective that a successful employee should have. When problems occur the Supervisors look to themselves first for the solution to the problem, not to the employee. They do self-

examination to determine if they may be negligent in practicing one or more of their own character qualities and are the source of the problem (Appendix E).

The executive leadership at Kimray, Inc. has on the first page of their *Policy Manual* this message to all employees: “Our goal is to strengthen the employees, their families, and the company by promoting excellence in character” (Kimray, Inc., 1994). They believe developing good character will motivate a person to achievement on the job, in his family, and the world in which he lives. By praising good character the employee will reach his or her full potential. Praise is pointing out words, actions, and attitudes that demonstrate character qualities and explaining how they benefited the person praising or the company (CTI, 1997).

The method for training employees for character development at Kimray is done through monthly *Character Bulletins*. Each month a new character quality is introduced to the leadership and employee level supervisors. Colorful posters and placards are placed around the work environment highlighting the monthly character quality with the working definition. If “*ORDERLINESS*” is the character trait for the month, then the definition “*Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve the greatest efficiency*” is displayed. The opposite, or negative, character trait is also listed. In this case “*disorganization*” is the negative trait of orderliness.

Supervisors are also trained to look for employees who are applying any of the other 49 character qualities (CTI, 1997/Appendix F). A certificate is presented to the employee praising the character quality that was observed. Character is highlighted or praised, achievement is never highlighted since Character First!® teaches that achievement is a by-product of developing and practicing good character.

Every month at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, 8,000 Air Force personnel are given a new character quality for the month based on Character First!® materials. Chief Sergeant Major Tealy Williams, United States Air Force, has been tasked by Major General Paul K. Carlton to integrate Character First!® principles into the doctrinal standards of the United States Air Force. Since January 1, 1999, all recruits that arrive at Lackland Air Force Base are introduced to Character First!® during Basic Military Training (BMT). Chief Sergeant Major Williams states that the high Air Force standards blend perfectly with the monthly character qualities in the *Character Bulletins*. New personnel have a wide range of ethical and moral standards as they enter the United States Air Force. When these character qualities are presented during BMT, the recruit knows exactly what is expected. The Character First!® training, though only 2 months old, has been received with excitement and high expectations (Williams, 1999).

In Coronado, California, is a training facility for the Navy's Sea Air and Land (SEAL) Special Boat Unit (SBU) 12, comprised of 300 personnel. Commander David Pittelkow, Commanding Officer of SBU 12, was interviewed on February 10, 1999 regarding the use of Character First!® in his SEAL unit. Commander (Cmdr.) Pittelkow stated that Character First!® had been in use since August 1998. The purpose of using Character First!® was to improve attitudes toward work, eliminate personal agendas or conflicts, reduce accidents, and to encourage the proper attitude toward government issued equipment. Cmdr. Pittelkow stated the only hindrance in applying Character First!® is the deployment of the SEAL's in and out of his Command to other parts of the world for training or tactical application. New personnel, upon arrival to the Command, are briefed by the Training Officer in the Character First!® procedures and applications.

Monthly character qualities are highlighted and *Character Bulletins* are discussed at staff meetings. The benefits have already been observed, as reported by the Executive Officer, almost eliminating investigations into personnel problems and ‘Captain’s Masses’, which are judicial proceedings for disciplinary action. His ultimate goal is to instill universally desired character qualities and develop a moral compass for these young men and women, developing behavior that will build a foundation for success in their Navy career and in their life (Pittelkow, 1999).

Commander Donald L. Roy is Executive Officer to the Naval Air Reserve, Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego, California. A telephone interview with Commander Roy was conducted on February 10, 1999. Since October 1998, Cmdr. Roy has been using Character First!® with 50 staff officers. In similar manner to Kimray’s Tom Hill, Chief Sergeant Major Tealy Williams, and Cmdr. Pitteltow of SEAL SBU 12, monthly staff meetings are held where the character focus of the month is presented and discussed. During these meetings, personnel who have been observed practicing the desired character qualities are recognized through certificate presentations. The program has only been in effect for about 4 months, so tangible results are still limited, but staff officers recognize the potential value and have received this character development training with great enthusiasm and expectations (Roy, 1999). Cmdr. Roy offered to assist Bonita Fire Department in training and implementation of the Character First!® program should it be chosen for developing positive employee character qualities.

The evidence is quite overwhelming for moral and ethical character development in today’s world. Literature researched, for the most part, provided a gloomy picture of fire service personnel, police, employees, school age children, businesses and business

people who have no moral compass to guide them, or who have chosen to ignore what they know as right or wrong for personal fulfillment.

The research was not all discouraging. Phoenix Fire Department and their *value added customer service* is an excellent example of putting character qualities such as selflessness, patience, kindness, and being respectful to work for improving the department image. Businesses like Kimray, Inc. alongside testimonial letters from companies like, Holleytex Mills (Appendix G), Master Manufactures, Inc. (Appendix H), Lovington Good Samaritan Center (Appendices I-1 & I-2), Stueve Construction Company (Appendix J), and recommendation letters from Juvenile Judges (Appendix K), give much encouragement and direction for other businesses to improve attitudes and lives of employees. People in highly specialized leadership positions like Air Force Chief Sergeant Major Tealy Williams, Commander David Pittelkow of SEAL Special Boat Unit 12 and Naval Executive Officer Don Roy, give optimism to those wanting to make a difference in the work environment and employee character.

Research of other leadership development and employee training resulted in no other character development program that compared with Character First!®. Other programs identify visible problems such as low productivity, poor attendance, anger, drug use, etc., but do not deal with the root causes. Re-engineering, transactional or transformational leadership, Total Quality Management (TQM), Continuous Quality Management (CQM), Quality Improvement (QI), Change Management Models (CMM), Path-Goal theory, and many varied and challenging management tools are offered to get the most out of employees by focusing on productivity and not people. Character First!® identified the root causes of negative character traits then showed employees and leaders



the positive character qualities desired plus the benefits of having good character.

Character First!® focused on the individual rather than on productivity or achievement.

The belief is that some of the positive by-products of developing and having good character will be increased productivity and achievement. The program that was most impressive was Character First!®. Character First!® would be a worthwhile training program to pursue for positive character development at Bonita Fire Department.

This researcher was very impressed with the Character First!® program.

## **PROCEDURES**

The focus of this research project is the development of executive fire officers of the future. The primary question is, how can this be accomplished? Research on leadership development was gathered from books, computer searches, comparing similar applied research projects from the Learning Resource Library at the National Fire Academy, periodicals, newspapers, and fire journals. The type of leaders that fire departments, police agencies, businesses, and communities want have certain characteristics in common. Those universally accepted characteristics were trust, ethical behavior, moral standards, and good character.

The training practices and procedures at Bonita Fire Department were examined for moral, ethical, or character development. Other than a cursory policy issued from the Fire Chief, no formal monthly or annual training on character development has ever been given. The decision to research character development programs for Bonita Fire Department began.

A questionnaire/survey was sent to Training Officers of 60 California fire departments (Appendix L) that were comparable to Bonita Fire Department in either

number of personnel or population (Appendix M). Forty-four fire departments (73%) returned the survey. Two were returned by the Post Office as undeliverable and fourteen fire departments did not respond.

The purpose of the questionnaire/survey was to rate 10 character qualities, in order of importance. The goal was to determine if moral or ethical values were part of annual training. The questionnaire/survey of the 60 California fire department Training Officers represented over 1,900 fire personnel and approximately 700,000 residents with the 44 Training Officers who responded. Table 1 gives the questionnaire/survey results.

**TABLE 1**

**Survey/Questionnaire of 60 Fire Department Training Officers (44 responses)**

<i>Character Rating/Number of #1 votes</i>	<i>Percentage First Place Votes (rounded)</i>
1. Truthful (13)	22%
2. (tie) Moral Integrity/Ethics (10 each)	17%
3. Dependable (5)	8%
4. Self-Control (5)	8%
5. Tolerant (2)	3%
6. Compassionate (1)	2%
7. Punctual (3)	5%
8. Patient (2)	3%
9. Loyalty (5)	8%
1. Does your department include ethics or moral values during annual training for:	
all personnel?	only those in leadership or command positions?
<b>11 (25%)</b>	<b>2 (5%)</b>
	<b>31 (70%)</b>
2. Do you believe fire service personnel are perceived by the public to have high ethical and moral integrity?	
	<b>44 (100%) -yes    0 – no</b>
3. Do you personally believe ethics or moral values should be mandatory training for all fire service personnel?	
	<b>42 (95%) - yes    2 (5%) - no</b>
4. Is it important for your Chief Officers, Battalion Chiefs, and Company Officers to have high ethical standards or moral integrity to be effective leaders?	
very important	important    neutral    not very important    does not matter
<b>35 (79%)</b>	<b>9 (21%)    0    0    0</b>

An identical questionnaire (Appendix N) was given to 5 contingent fire departments in South Bay Zone 5 that train with Bonita Fire Department on a monthly schedule, year-round. One hundred sixty-four professionally trained and highly motivated fire personnel responded to the questionnaire on moral and ethics training in their departments. They also rated in order of importance the character qualities they felt fire officers should have. The results in this questionnaire/survey are shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

**Survey/Questionnaire of 164 Fire Personnel in South Bay Zone 5**

<i>Character rating/Number of #1 Votes</i>	<i>Percentage of First Place Votes (rounded)</i>
1. Moral Integrity (68)	40%
2. Ethics (62)	37%
3. Loyalty (45)	26%
4. Truthful (40)	23%
5. Punctual (10)	5%
6. Self-Control (0)	0%
7. Dependable (5)	3%
8. Patient (0)	0%
9. Tolerant (0)	0%
10. Compassionate (0)	0%
1. Does your department include ethics or moral values during annual training for:	
all personnel?	only those in leadership or command positions?
<b>42 (25%)</b>	<b>12 (7%)</b>
	none?
	<b>110 (68%)</b>
2. Do you believe fire service personnel are perceived by the public to have high ethical and moral integrity?	
<b>160 (97.5%)</b> –yes	<b>4 (2.5%)</b> – no
3. Do you personally believe ethics or moral values should be mandatory training for all fire service personnel?	
<b>152 (92%)</b> – yes	<b>12 (8%)</b> - no
4. Is it important for your Chief Officers, Battalion Chiefs, and Company Officers to have high ethical standards or moral integrity to be effective leaders?	
very important	important
<b>106 (65%)</b>	<b>53 (32%)</b>
neutral	not very important
<b>5 (3%)</b>	<b>0</b>
	does not matter
	<b>0</b>

Following the return and tabulation of these results, a search for character development programs began. An Internet search by computer was limited, but helpful in eliminating many leadership training programs or seminars. Character First!® was the most promising and significant find. Officials at the Character Training Institute in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma were contacted for further information. Names of businesses nation-wide, phone numbers, and character consultants in San Diego County were contacted. David Frederick, from the Character Training Institute was most helpful in supplying local names for interviews and testimonial letters from Companies using Character First!®. Through personal interviews and testimonials of companies that use Character First!®, it was decided that this method of introducing good, positive character qualities was the method and program that would be of most benefit for Bonita Fire Department.

## **RESULTS**

The literature reviewed and the procedures that followed, have answered the initial questions that were designed to guide the researcher in evaluating a conclusion for possible action in implementing a character development-training program at Bonita Fire Department.

### **1. What are the current training programs for employees at Bonita Fire Department?**

The present training programs at Bonita Fire Department are based on training curriculum from State of California Fire Marshal's Office (SCFM). Within the SCFM is the California State Board of Fire Services (Training Division). The majority of training from these 2 agencies is recognized and adopted by Bonita Fire Department. The

overwhelming majority of the training is focused on the command and control or the tactics and strategy of emergency situations. The lone exception was the Management 1 class in the Certified Fire Officer series. Within this class, various management styles were presented, but never were any references made about moral, ethical, or positive character development for the individual. Classes for advancement are also recognized through local community colleges. These are basic, essential fire science classes that have practical and immediate application to job requirements.

Monthly training is normally on a shift basis with the Captain of each shift leading the training sessions at the direction of the Training Officer. These sessions focus on staying up to date on medical procedures, keeping familiar with street and hydrant locations, or safety procedures and regulations. In Service Training (IST) is conducted on a monthly basis also. IST brings all fire departments in Zone 5 together for combined training. These sessions include confined space rescue, hazardous materials identification or mitigation protocols, recertification of State mandated skills, and other topics that involve multiple engine or truck companies to be effective.

Lacking in these training sessions, whether combined with multiple departments or on a shift basis, is character quality development for individual firefighters.

## **2. Are there any character-based standards or models that can be used for training fire service personnel?**

Research found fire departments that had polled department employees as to what moral or character qualities would be of value to the department. Woodinville Fire & Life Safety District based advancement and promotion on principle-centered standards that had been time-tested and time-honored. A written code of ethics has been agreed

upon at Palm Beach Fire-Rescue for employee conduct that would improve and enhance public service and public trust.

The only character based training model found was the Character First!® program from the Character Training Institute in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The monthly *Character Bulletins* given to those in leadership or supervisory roles proved effective in achieving the desired results. Absenteeism declined, workers compensation claims were significantly reduced, sometimes as much as 90%, theft was eliminated, job satisfaction increased, and job attitudes changed for the positive. This character quality training of the employees affected the families and the community as well. The benefits extended beyond the work place.

The military has recognized and implemented character-based training. The United States Air Force, Navy and Naval Air Reserves are currently training over 8,000 men and women with Character First!® on a monthly schedule. Initial results have been promising and positive toward achieving the desired results.

The end results for this research question are that ethics, morals, and character qualities can be agreed upon as beneficial, but consistent training must take place to instill these objectives into the daily habits of the employees

### **3. Can a morally based character-training program be provided at Bonita Fire Department to develop future fire service executive leaders?**

A morally based character training program can be provided at Bonita Fire Department to develop future fire service executive leaders. Based on information gathered from the Air Force, Navy, fire department questionnaire/survey, and numerous businesses around the county, a morally based character training program can be taught at

Bonita Fire Department. The successes from documented resources have shown a positive benefit to personnel and productivity when time-tested character qualities are incorporated into daily work habits.

Ken Folisi wrote in his article, *Teaching Ethics – Can We, Should We?*, that the answer is in helping personnel understand their individual character traits, or tendencies, first, then how these traits affect our relations with others. Character First!®, in a similar way, encourages leaders to do a self-examination before going to employees or co-workers for problem solving.

The Boy Scouts of America emphasize teaching character qualities in preparing participants for future success, as Al Mozingo related in his article for leadership qualities needed in fire departments today. The time tested acceptance of recognizing the benefits of teaching truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, courage, and other positive character traits for making successful employees, and at the same time making successful citizens, cannot be denied. Table 1 and Table 2 confirmed (95% and 92%) that ethics and moral values should be mandatory training for all fire service personnel.

During the research phase of this project, the topic of character development through training was discussed with the Chief Orville Moody, Bonita Fire Chief. His acknowledgement and confirmation for character building was a positive affirmation for proceeding. The final approval for implementing character training will depend on future discussions with the Training Officer, the Fire Chief, and the Board of Directors for Bonita Fire Department.

#### **4. How are other like-sized and adjacent fire departments, building character into their employees for future executive leadership?**

The results of research for this question showed a lack of training in this area. Those surveyed acknowledged that the public perceives fire service personnel to have high ethical and moral integrity. The results from Training Officers and fire service personnel overwhelmingly said it was very important (79%/65%) or important (21%/32%) for future fire service leaders to have high moral and ethical standards as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Many of the questionnaires had hand written comments regarding ethics or moral training that was being taught. Most said the ethical or moral training was centered toward sexual harassment only.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results from this study indicated that character quality development through regular training is needed, and wanted, from those fire service personnel surveyed. Although the main focus of this research was toward character development of fire service personnel and how it related to Bonita Fire Department, research showed that military and private and public businesses also benefited from having a character based program in effect or suffered due to lack of character in employees.

Implementing a character quality based training program, such as Character First!®, would raise the public perception of the firefighters at Bonita Fire Department to a new, higher standard. Without a doubt, the public would be receiving a higher standard of service when qualities such as attentiveness, compassion, initiative, or decisiveness were applied during stressful medical or fire emergencies. The most positive benefit would be realized during the routine times of daily activities. This would be when individuals seek out ways to make customer services from Bonita Fire Department more



efficient through thriftiness, resourcefulness, responsibility, creativity, enthusiasm, and others. The individual would become a better employee by being consistently punctual, discerning in department operations and procedures, loyal during difficult situations, and tolerant in stressful situations that demand such a character quality.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The data collected supports the need for developing a character quality-training program at Bonita Fire Department. The Air Force, Navy, and a number of businesses have been using Character First!® to achieve measurable positive changes. Research verifies the declining standard of ethical and moral standards across the nation and in all age groups.

It is recommended that Bonita Fire Department contact David Frederick with the Character Training Institute in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. David Frederick would be made aware that Cmdr. Donald Roy would be willing to come to Bonita Fire Department and apprise Chief Moody to the benefits of using the Character First!® program.

The positive and potential improvements to Bonita Fire Department can only be seen after the Character First!® program has been initiated. Successes from businesses such as Holleytex Spinning Mills, Master Manufacturers, Inc., Lovington Good Samaritan Center, Stueve Construction Company, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial Juvenile Probation Office of Sulphur Springs, Texas should be reviewed and contact with these participants in the Character First!® program should be made. The personal testimonials would add more credibility to the effectiveness of the Character First!® program.

If Chief Moody agrees with the research and the recommendations, then a volunteer would be trained by the Character Training Institute to implement the Character

First!® program at Bonita Fire Department. The monthly character quality would be selected by Chief Moody and the staff officers. Each shift Captain would brief his men about the purpose and definition of the monthly character quality. Regular staff meetings between the Chief and Captains occur the last Monday of each month. The new character quality would be introduced and discussed at this time, plus a review of the previous months' character quality. This would be the time to recognize any individuals who were applying the selected monthly character quality, or any of the other 49 character qualities.

An evaluation of the Character First!® program should be completed every 3 months to change, correct, or refine the program. During this review and evaluation time input from the Chief and staff officers would occur to help make the program more effective and confirm the direction in which it was headed.

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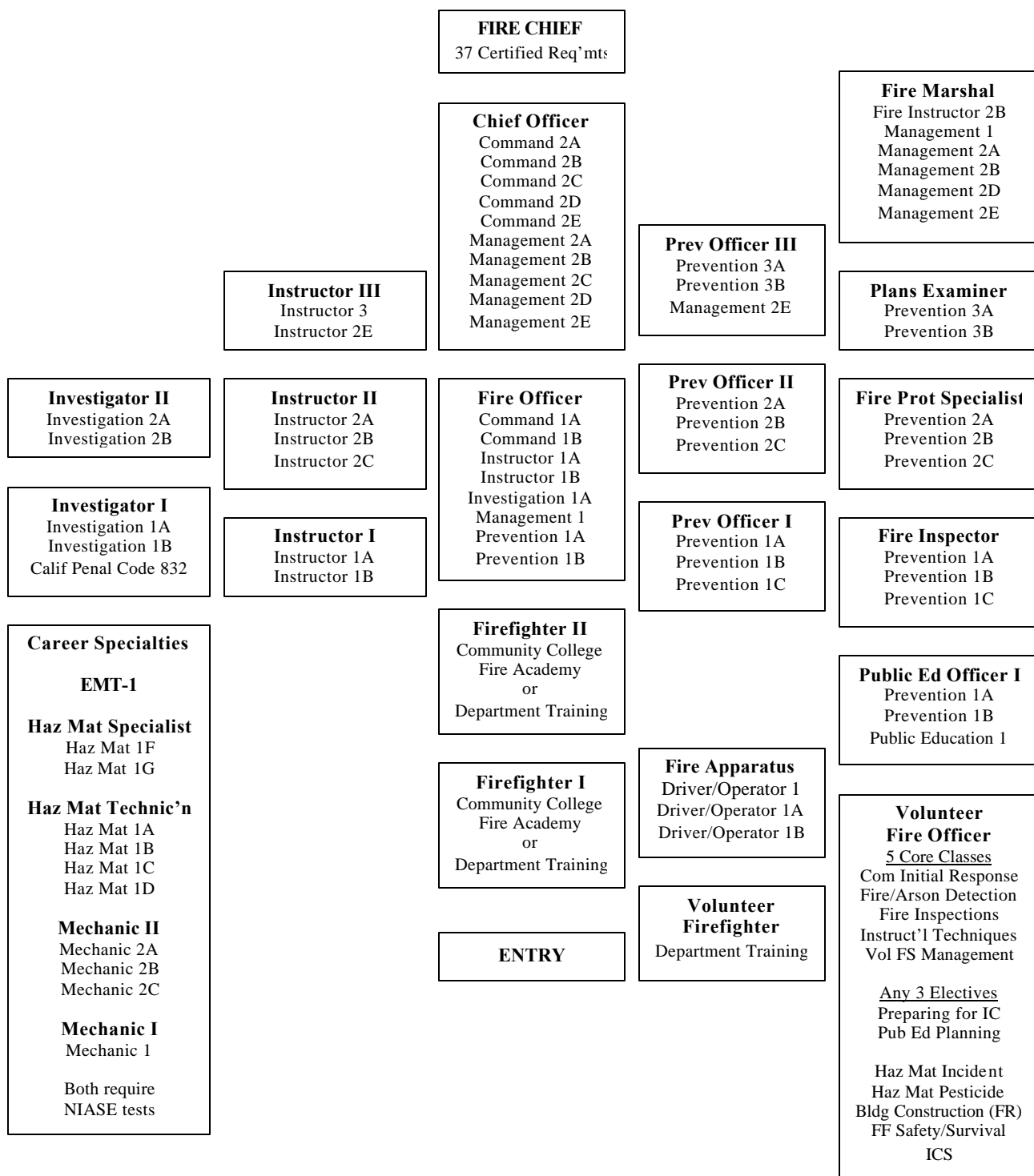
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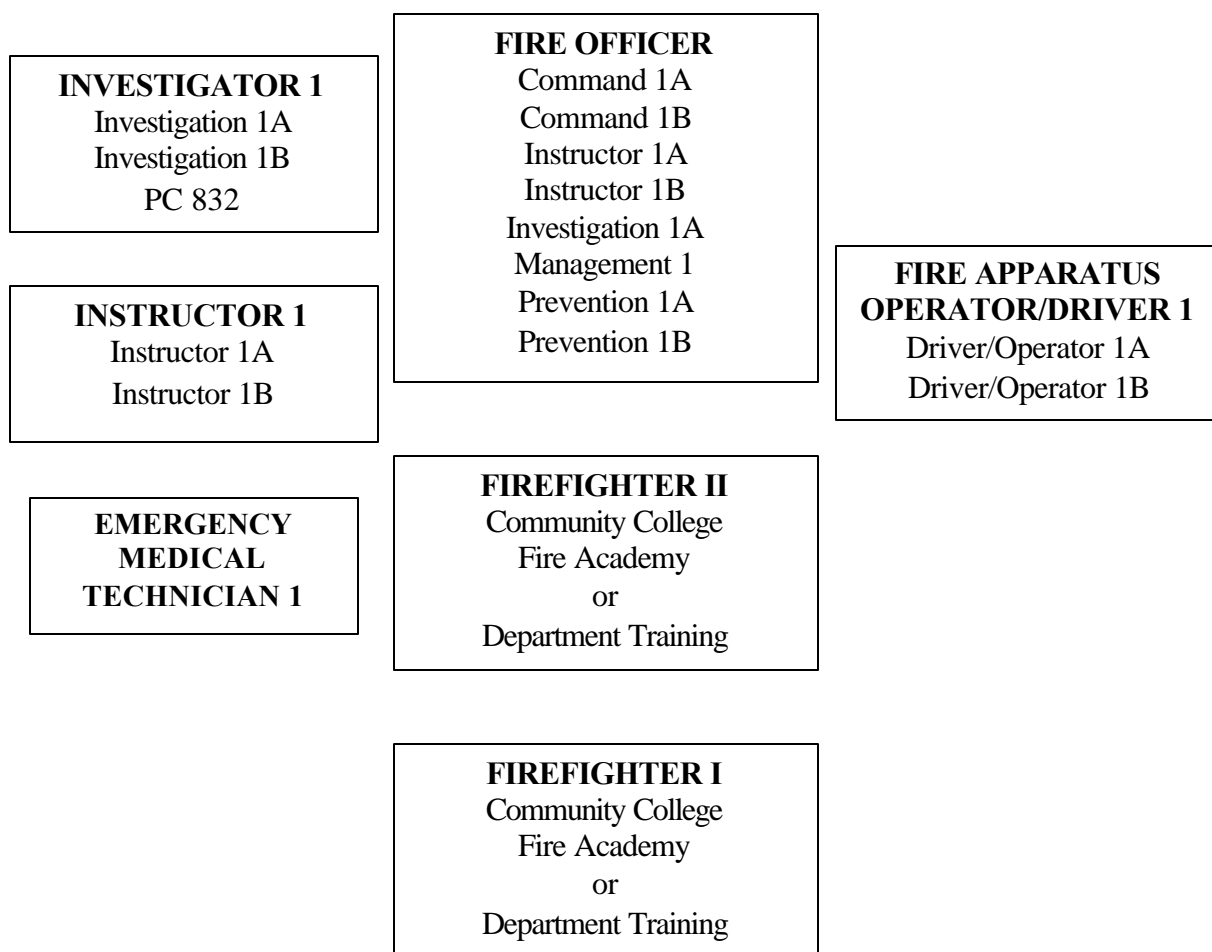
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## APPENDIX A

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES  
CERTIFICATION TRACKS

**APPENDIX B****CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE****CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES****CERTIFICATION TRACKS**

(Courses recognized by Bonita Fire Department for promotional purposes)





## APPENDIX C

### LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

**AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

**I WILL** keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity, will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

**I WILL** never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromises for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

**I RECOGNIZE** the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession . . . law enforcement.

## APPENDIX D

### WORKING CHARACTER QUALITIES

**VISIONARY** COMMITTED TO GROWTH, LOOKS BEYOND PROBLEMS TO CAUSES, AND DEVELOPS PRECISE SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS.

<b>WISDOM</b> vs. <i>Natural Inclinations</i> Seeing and responding to life situations from a larger frame of reference.	<b>DISCERNMENT</b> vs. <i>Judgment</i> The ability to understand the deeper reasons as to why things happen.	<b>FAITH</b> vs. <i>Presumption</i> Picturing what my authorities intend to do in a situation and acting in harmony with it.	<b>DISCRETION</b> vs. <i>Simplemindedness</i> The ability to avoid words, actions, and attitudes which could result in undesirable consequences	<b>LOVE</b> vs. <i>Selfishness</i> Giving to others' basic needs without having as my motive personal reward.	<b>CREATIVITY</b> Vs. <i>Underachievement</i> Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective.	<b>ENTHUSIASM</b> vs. <i>Apathy</i> Expressing with my spirit the joy of my soul
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**TEACHER** IMPARTS WISDOM, MATURITY, AND SKILLS TO OTHERS, VALIDATES DIRECTION, AND ENSURES COMPLETENESS.

<b>SELF-CONTROL</b> vs. <i>Self-Indulgence</i> Rejecting my own desires and doing what is right in all areas of my life.	<b>REVERENCE</b> vs. <i>Disrespect</i> Awareness of how every person and event in my life can be used to produce character in me.	<b>DILIGENCE</b> vs. <i>Slothfulness</i> Investing all my energy to complete the tasks that are assigned to me.	<b>THOROUGHNESS</b> vs. <i>Incompleteness</i> Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words if neglected.	<b>DEPENDIBILITY</b> vs. <i>Inconsistency</i> Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice.	<b>SECURITY</b> vs. <i>Anxiety</i> Structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away.	<b>PATIENCE</b> vs. <i>Restlessness</i> Accepting a difficult situation without giving my authority a deadline to remove it.
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**SERVER** SEES AND MEETS OTHERS' NEEDS, FREES THEM TO ACCOMPLISH GOALS, AND INVESTS TIME AND ENERGY IN THEIR SUCCESS.

<b>ALERTNESS</b> vs. <i>Unawareness</i> Being aware of that which is taking place around me so I can have the right responses.	<b>HOSPITALITY</b> vs. <i>Loneliness</i> Cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those around me.	<b>GENEROSITY</b> vs. <i>Stinginess</i> Realizing I am a steward of all I have and using it for the best purposes.	<b>JOYFULNESS</b> vs. <i>Self-Pity</i> The spontaneous enthusiasm of my spirit when my soul is in fellowship with all those around me.	<b>FLEXIBILITY</b> vs. <i>Resistance</i> Not setting my affections on ideas or plans which could be changed by my authorities.	<b>AVAILABILITY</b> vs. <i>Self-Centeredness</i> Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I am serving.	<b>ENDURANCE</b> vs. <i>Giving up</i> The inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish the best.
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**ORGANIZER** VISUALIZING FINAL RESULTS AND DIRECTS RESOURCES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF GOALS

<b>ORDERLINESS</b> vs. <i>Disorganization</i> Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve the greatest efficiency.	<b>INITIATIVE</b> vs. <i>Unresponsiveness</i> Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked.	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b> vs. <i>Unreliability</i> Knowing and doing what both those in authority and others are expecting of me.	<b>HUMILITY</b> vs. <i>Pride</i> Recognizing that others are actually responsible for the achievements in my life.	<b>DECISIVENESS</b> vs. <i>Doublemindedness</i> The ability to finalize difficult decisions based on what will make my authority successful.	<b>DETERMINATION</b> vs. <i>Faintheartedness</i> Purposing to accomplish the goals I am given in the allotted time regardless of the opposition.	<b>LOYALTY</b> vs. <i>Unfaithfulness</i> Using difficult times to demonstrate my commitment to those whom I have been asked to serve.
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**MEDIATOR** IS DEEPLY LOYAL, COMPASSIONATE AND ANALYZES THE BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS OF A GIVEN DIRECTION.

<b>ATTENTIVENESS</b> vs. <i>Unconcern</i> Showing the worth of a person by giving full concentration to his words.	<b>SENSITIVITY</b> vs. <i>Callousness</i> Exercising my senses so I can perceive the true spirit and emotions of those around me.	<b>JUSTICE</b> vs. <i>Fairness</i> Personal responsibility to all the laws governing my actions.	<b>COMPASSION</b> vs. <i>Indifference</i> Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.	<b>GENTLENESS</b> vs. <i>Harshness</i> Showing personal care and concern in meeting the needs of others.	<b>DEFERENCE</b> vs. <i>Rudeness</i> Limiting my freedom in order not to offend the tastes of those whom I have been asked to serve.	<b>MEEKNESS</b> vs. <i>Anger</i> Yielding my personal rights and expectations with a desire to serve.
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**IDEALIST** HAS INTEGRITY, IS OPEN TO CORRECTION, IS WILLING TO IDENTIFY PROBLEMS, AND SPEAKS THE TRUTH BOLDLY.

<b>TRUTHFULNESS</b> vs. <i>Deception</i> Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts.	<b>OBEDIENCE</b> vs. <i>Willfulness</i> Cheerfully carrying out the directions and the wishes of those who are responsible for me.	<b>SINCERITY</b> vs. <i>Hypocrisy</i> Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.	<b>VIRTUE</b> vs. <i>Impurity</i> The moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiates from my life as I do what is right.	<b>BOLDNESS</b> vs. <i>Fearfulness</i> Confidence that what I have to say or do is true, right, and just in the sight of those in authority.	<b>FORGIVENESS</b> vs. <i>Rejection</i> Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and bearing no grudge against them.	<b>PERSUASIVENESS</b> vs. <i>Restlessness</i> Accepting a difficult situation without giving my authority a deadline to remove it.
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**PROVIDER** IS RESOURCEFUL, PRUDENT, THRIFTY, AND CONSTANTLY ENSURES THE BEST USE OF ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

<b>RESOURCEFULNESS</b> vs. <i>Wasteful</i> Finding practical uses for that which others would overlook or discard.	<b>THRIFTYNESS</b> vs. <i>Extravagance</i> Not letting myself or other spend that which is not necessary.	<b>CONTENTMENT</b> vs. <i>Covetousness</i> Realizing that I already have everything I need for my present happiness.	<b>PUNCTUALITY</b> vs. <i>Tardiness</i> Being ready to begin each task at an appointed time.	<b>TOLERANCE</b> vs. <i>Prejudice</i> Acceptance of others as unique expressions of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity.	<b>CAUTIOUSNESS</b> vs. <i>Rashness</i> Knowing how important right timing is in accomplishing right actions.	<b>GRATEFULNESS</b> vs. <i>Unthankfulness</i> Letting other know by my words and actions how they have benefited my life.
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## APPENDIX E

### SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE FOR DEALING WITH PROBLEM EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE'S VISIBLE ACTIONS	SUPERVISOR'S TENDENCY	EMPLOYEE'S INNER ATTITUDE	NECESSARY ACTION	CHARACTER QUALITIES FOCUS
1. Foolish decisions, Gullible, Naïve, Inexperienced	Criticize	Lack of Understanding	Instruct the simple	Wisdom Discretion Discernment
2. Enjoy foolish activities, Repeat past foolishness	Ignore, Give warnings without consequences	Lack of responsibility	Rebuke & instruct the foolish	Self-control Responsibility Sensitivity
3. Ridicules those who are under authority; Drugs, Alcohol abuse	Suspect/threaten	Rejection of authority	Turn over to authorities for discipline or punishment	Humility Justice Deference Virtue
4. Rebellion, Insubordination  Joins with other troublemakers	Make more rules  Transfer	Establish self as authority  Compatibility with other troublemakers	Strong discipline  Fire/lay-off, reduce work force	Reverence Obedience Loyalty Meekness Sincerity
5. Rejects all authority; Tries to be the authority	Recommend they go for next promotion or advancement	Condemning Contemptuous Contentious	Fire Lay-off Reduction in work force	Contentment Gratefulness Forgiveness
6. Listing rights and expectations  Distrust, Apathy Lack of Follow- through  Listening to bad reports; Taking up offences of others  Magnified reports of discontent	Force compliance  Malign/Complain  React to lack of accomplishment and attitude  Minimize the problems	Independent spirit  Wounded spirit  Alertness to discontentedness  Judgmental spirit	Show the end results  Examine my response or cause  Need for a clear conscience  Discharge the disloyal employee	Meekness Availability Reverence Humility Truthfulness Enthusiasm Forgiveness Discernment Gratefulness Contentment Faith Loyalty
7. Lack of initiative; Lazy; Does not finish tasks; Always has an excuse	Assign to a less strategic position	Lives for the moment	Hold accountable for task assignments; Assign to work with others; Must deal with slothfulness	Initiative Diligence Self-control Dependability Availability Orderliness

## APPENDIX F

### 49 IDEAL CHARACTER QUALITIES AND DEFINITIONS

WISDOM	DISCERNMENT	FAITH	DISCRETION	LOVE	CREATIVITY	ENTHUSIASM
<i>vs. Natural Inclinations</i> Seeing and responding to life situations from a larger frame of reference.	<i>vs. Judgment</i> The ability to understand the deeper reasons as to why things happen.	<i>vs. Presumption</i> Picturing what my authorities intend to do in a situation and acting in harmony with it.	<i>vs. Simplemindedness</i> The ability to avoid words, actions, and attitudes which could result in undesirable consequences	<i>vs. Selfishness</i> Giving to others' basic needs without having as my motive personal reward.	<i>vs. Underachievement</i> Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective.	<i>vs. Apathy</i> Expressing with my spirit the joy of my soul
SELF-CONTROL	REVERENCE	DILIGENCE	THOROUGHNESS	DEPENDIBILITY	SECURITY	PATIENCE
<i>vs. Self-Indulgence</i> Rejecting my own desires and doing what is right in all areas of my life.	<i>vs. Disrespect</i> Awareness of how every person and event in my life can be used to produce character in me.	<i>vs. Slothfulness</i> Investing all my energy to complete the tasks that are assigned to me.	<i>vs. Incompleteness</i> Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words if neglected.	<i>vs. Inconsistency</i> Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice.	<i>vs. Anxiety</i> Structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away.	<i>vs. Restlessness</i> Accepting a difficult situation without giving my authority a deadline to remove it.
ALERTNESS	HOSPITALITY	GENEROSITY	JOYFULNESS	FLEXIBILITY	AVAILABILITY	ENDURANCE
<i>vs. Unawareness</i> Being aware of that which is taking place around me so I can have the right responses.	<i>vs. Loneliness</i> Cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those around me.	<i>vs. Stinginess</i> Realizing I am a steward of all I have and using it for the best purposes.	<i>vs. Self-Pity</i> The spontaneous enthusiasm of my spirit when my soul is in fellowship with all those around me.	<i>vs. Resistance</i> Not setting my affections on ideas or plans which could be changed by my authorities.	<i>vs. Self-Centeredness</i> Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I am serving.	<i>Vs. Giving up</i> The inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish the best.
ORDERLINESS	INITIATIVE	RESPONSIBILITY	HUMILITY	DECISIVENESS	DETERMINATION	LOYALTY
<i>vs. Disorganization</i> Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve the greatest efficiency.	<i>vs. Unresponsiveness</i> Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked.	<i>vs. Unreliability</i> Knowing and doing what both those in authority and others are expecting of me.	<i>vs. Pride</i> Recognizing that others are actually responsible for the achievements in my life.	<i>vs. Doublemindedness</i> The ability to finalize difficult decisions based on what will make my authority successful.	<i>vs. Faintheartedness</i> Purposing to accomplish the goals I am given in the allotted time regardless of the opposition.	<i>vs. Unfaithfulness</i> Using difficult times to demonstrate my commitment to those whom I have been asked to serve.
ATTENTIVENESS	SENSITIVITY	JUSTICE	COMPASSION	GENTLENESS	DEFERENCE	MEEKNESS
<i>vs. Unconcern</i> Showing the worth of a person by giving full concentration to his words.	<i>vs. Callousness</i> Exercising my senses so I can perceive the true spirit and emotions of those around me.	<i>vs. Fairness</i> Personal responsibility to all the laws governing my actions.	<i>vs. Indifference</i> Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.	<i>vs. Harshness</i> Showing personal care and concern in meeting the needs of others.	<i>vs. Rudeness</i> Limiting my freedom in order not to offend the tastes of those whom I have been asked to serve.	<i>vs. Anger</i> Yielding my personal rights and expectations with a desire to serve.
TRUTHFULNESS	OBEDIENCE	SINCERITY	VIRTUE	BOLDNESS	FORGIVENESS	PERSUASIVENESS
<i>vs. Deception</i> Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts.	<i>vs. Willfulness</i> Cheerfully carrying out the directions and the wishes of those who are responsible for me.	<i>vs. Hypocrisy</i> Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.	<i>vs. Impurity</i> The moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiates from my life as I do what is right.	<i>vs. Fearfulness</i> Confidence that what I have to say or do is true, right, and just in the sight of those in authority.	<i>vs. Rejection</i> Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and bearing no grudge against them.	<i>vs. Restlessness</i> Accepting a difficult situation without giving my authority a deadline to remove it.
RESOURCEFULNESS	THRIFTYNESS	CONTENTMENT	PUNCTUALITY	TOLERANCE	CAUTIOUSNESS	GRATEFULNESS
<i>vs. Wasteful</i> Finding practical uses for that which others would overlook or discard.	<i>vs. Extravagance</i> Not letting myself or other spend that which is not necessary.	<i>vs. Covetousness</i> Realizing that I already have everything I need for my present happiness.	<i>vs. Tardiness</i> Being ready to begin each task at an appointed time.	<i>vs. Prejudice</i> Acceptance of others as unique expressions of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity.	<i>vs. Rashness</i> Knowing how important right timing is in accomplishing right actions.	<i>vs. Unthankfulness</i> Letting other know by my words and actions how they have benefited my life.

**APPENDIX G****COPY OF HOLLEYTEX SPINNING MILLS LETTER TESTIMONIAL LETTER**

Tom Hill  
52 NW 42 St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

July 23, 1996

Dear Tom,

We have been having tremendous success with our character program. Not only are we seeing a different look on the faces of our people, but vendors, customers, etc. are telling us how they can feel the difference when they walk through the door. It's amazing the positive responses we are getting.

Our local community bestowed upon us the "Business of the Year" award earlier this year due to our family atmosphere.

We have received two awards for reducing worker's compensation costs. One from the Home Insurance Company, and one from the Oklahoma Safety Council. Both of these were direct results of our new direction.

Chuck Shannon, counselor at the Workers' Compensation Court, has been touting us throughout the state as a company that takes care of its people. He gave a presentation at one of our shift meetings and was overwhelmed with the response of our people.

We achieved national recognition in the April 29, 1996 edition of the "Bureau of National Affairs." It's a magazine out of Washington, D.C. The article discussed our drop in Workers' Compensation Cost related to the character program. The article was also picked up in the June issue of "Occupational Hazards." Due to these articles, we have received requests from a company in New York, Missouri, and one from Pennsylvania.

Dana Corporation, a top 100-company world wide, visited our shift meetings in June 1996. They were interested in our programs relating to worker's compensation costs.

The City of Oklahoma City visited our shift meetings this month. They were extremely excited about what we are doing.

We have shared our story with such people as Jack Bowen of Channel 25, Oklahoma Small Business Development Center out of Alva, OK, the Workers' Compensation Administrator and some of the Judges, the Watonga Mayor, the Kiwanas Club, Associate District Judge, Governair Corporation out of Oklahoma City, etc. We share anytime we are given a chance. Thankfully, this program has touched many people in our path.

Sincerely,  
Allan Payne  
Plant Manager

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.

**APPENDIX H****COPY OF MASTER MANUFACTURERS, INC. TESTIMONIAL LETTER**

Mr. David Frederick  
Character First  
Character Training Institute  
520 W. Main Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2220

May 1, 1998

Dear Mr. Frederick,

I wish to thank you and all the people at *Character First!*® for the creativity of the materials that you provide, the joyfulness that everyone I have talked to a *Character First!*® has shared with me, and your punctuality in providing the materials I need for successful implementation of the program.

There have been several significant results for our company as a result of having the resources of *Character First!*® available to us.

1. Character standards identified
2. Company stability increased
3. Weak areas of employee's lives enhanced
4. More valuable people hired

We have now completed our first year and a half of monthly meetings. These monthly meetings are built around introducing one of the character bulletins. We saw the opportunity with the *Character First!*® material to focus on character with quality.

Master Manufacturers, Inc. has seen a growing stability as we focus on keeping our commitments to customers, vendors and employees. Employees have more confidence in the dependability of management due to consistently held monthly meetings. According to some members of our senior leadership team, the specific character quality for the month prepared them to make major positive changes in their lives. Overall it allows us to develop toward our maximum potential in these areas.

Finally, since hiring the wrong people can be very damaging to any organization, the character hiring process has helped exclude some undesirable people who previously would have been hired, and has increased the retention rate of employees.

Sincerely,  
Robert B. Hayward, Jr.  
Chief Operating Officer

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.

**APPENDIX I-1****COPY OF LOVINGTON GOOD SAMARITAN CENTER  
TESTIMONIAL LETTER**

Mr. David Frederick  
Character Training Institute  
520 W. Main Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2220

March 21, 1998

Dear Mr. Frederick,

A recent report from the New Mexico Health Care Association showed that the average turnover rate for nurse aides for 1997 in New Mexico nursing homes was 103.5%. As little as a year ago our turnover rate was similar. We have just entered our second year of using Character First materials and hiring practices. It took us a year to really utilize the program and develop an environment where the whole team is "thinking character" on a regular basis. The benefits are now beginning to show. Our administrator has tied a quarterly monetary "character reward" for all staff that meet a strict set of criteria to the regular character recognition plan. As a result, we have seen the turnover rate for nurse aides in the first quarter of 1998 plummet to 4%. Our entire facility turnover for the quarter was 9%. Some may say that the monetary reward is the reason for the decline. Certainly, it is an incentive but it only worked because we have been able to retain a staff that is truly grateful for the reward. In our opinion, the reward worked because we have been able to hire people of character and affirm them with character recognition programs. The reward is truly a reward for demonstrating character, not an incentive to develop character.

The boost in morale, teamwork and job attitude is hard to accurately gauge. The staff are happy and dedicated professionals. A recent family survey we conducted showed that the families of the residents we serve overwhelmingly view us as a friendly and caring group. There is not a price tag we can put on the good will that we believe the Character First program has generated for our nursing center in the community.

We understand that the program is only as beneficial as we make it. We have made some mistakes in hiring and are not as diligent as we could be in praising people, but it has been the lynchpin in turning this nursing center into a high quality organization. We thank you for the excellent service and do appreciate your organization's commitment to making character the benchmark of American business.

Sincerely,  
Michael Sokoff  
Human Resources Director

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.

**APPENDIX I-2****COPY OF LOVINGTON GOOD SAMARITAN CENTER  
FOLLOW-UP TESTIMONIAL LETTER**

Mr. David Frederick  
Character Training Institute  
520 W. Main Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2220

May 1, 1998

Dear Mr. Frederick,

As a follow-up to the letter I sent to you last week I would like to share some more concrete information about the success of Character First in our facility. This week we were able to do a first quarter comparison study of sick pay, overtime and hiring costs for 1997 versus 1998. After completing the analysis we were so excited that we thought we would let you know the findings.

Compared to the first quarter of 1997 we showed a net saving of over fourteen thousand dollars (\$14,000). There was a sixty six hundred (\$6,600) dollar savings in sick pay compared to 1997, a five hundred dollar (\$500) savings in overtime, and a whopping seventy four hundred dollar (\$7,400) savings in hiring costs based on an accepted national average cost for hiring and training employees. Even after paying our quarterly character reward (by the way, only 15% of the staff did not qualify) our actual facility expense was minimal.

We realize, too, that hard figures like these only depict part of the overall picture. The security that a loyal and punctual staff brings to our residents cannot be measured in dollars and cents. The goodwill that a stable and responsible staff generates in the community is priceless. The positive image that the community has of our ability to meet the needs of its aging citizens is a good indicator of future income for the Center, as well. Being a non-profit organization all of these factors are examined closely as we project for the future. Our vision has been to be the employer of choice in our community. To this point, Character First has positioned us to see that vision become a reality.

Sincerely,

Michael Sokoff  
Human Resources Director

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.



## APPENDIX J

### COPY OF STUEVE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY TESTIMONIAL STORY

Joel Jaeger had a problem. His company, Stueve Construction, of Algona, Iowa, had poured the foundation of a building in the wrong place on site. Not only that, the measurements were wrong. Mr. Jaeger knew that the owner of the building must be told, particularly since Stueve Construction's character quality of the month was truthfulness. The surprising result of the company's honesty was the decision of the building owner to leave the foundation where it had been poured – and only because he had been told the truth. Additional benefits of the month's emphasis on truthfulness came when supervisors began returning stolen tools, as level of honesty increased among all levels of employee.

During the month that Stueve Construction was studying gratefulness, Mr. Jaeger spoke with an employee who was causing trouble. "Have you ever told your wife that you are grateful for her?" inquired Mr. Jaeger. This question completely stunned the man, who has since changed dramatically.

Another employee had a difficult time forgiving – clearing the record of those who had wronged him – and as a result held many grudges. He terrified everyone at the work site, but his coworkers were amazed when he began calling them behind the building to ask their forgiveness for his own offenses.

When Stueve Construction, which does business in 20 states, began implementing Character First! in 1994, the company was in a high risk insurance pool, paying high rates due to the accident-prone nature of the business. After 18-24 months of character emphasis, the company came out of the pool. Insurance rates have been cut drastically, and workers' compensation has dropped to half. Character First! has enabled Stueve Construction to develop surly construction workers into diligent men, causing wages to increase by 30% and the company to turn a profit.

What are some of the benefits of Character First! for Stueve Construction?

- Dishonesty eliminated within the company
- Positive changes in lives of employees
- Insurance rates cut
- Workers' compensation halved
- Employee productivity raised

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.

**APPENDIX K****COPY OF EIGHTH JUDICIAL JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICE  
TESTIMONIAL LETTER**

March 24, 1998

Dear Bill Gothard,

We have just completed our second Basic Seminar in Sulphur Springs. All but one of our staff in the 8<sup>th</sup> District Juvenile Probation Department was able to attend and we are expecting meaningful and lasting impacts on our lives. We can't begin to express our sincere gratitude to the Institute in Basic Life Principles and to you for agreeing to bring the Seminar to our community.

Specifically, our caseloads are down 25% from a year ago and our referral rates are down by almost 12%. These are very significant statistics because from 1990 to 1997 the departmental caseloads grew by almost 900% and referrals rose by almost 450%. After bringing the Seminar to Sulphur Springs, the juvenile crime rates and recidivism rates went down for the first time in 8 years. There are several youths whose lives have been transformed by their interaction with the IBLP ministries. The practical steps and wonderful insights taught in the Seminar do indeed bring about lasting solutions. Jack has been using principles and ideals from the Seminar in counseling with both children and parents.

We see these changes not only in the lives of juvenile probationers, but in the lives of our officers as well. The over-all results of bringing the Seminar to Sulphur Springs two times cannot be measured because so many amazing things are continuing to happen. For example, Character First is being implemented into several county governmental departments. To mention a few, the Chief of Police, Sheriff of Hopkins County, the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce and members of the business community have expressed interest in Character First. With Character First already being taught in our schools, we believe there is a good chance the entire community will embrace it.

Transformations are taking place in the city of Sulphur Springs. We believe every city and town in this country would do well to embrace the Seminar and Character First if they are sincere in seeing lasting results.

Sincerely,

John Perry, Chief  
8<sup>th</sup> Judicial Juvenile Probation

Permission to re-copy by David Frederick, Character Training Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. February 3, 1999.

## APPENDIX L

### 60 CALIFORNIA FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING OFFICERS QUESTIONED ON CHARACTER

Adelanto Fire Department	El Segundo Fire Department
Albany Fire Department	Escondido Fire Department
Alpine Fire Protection District	Grass Valley Fire Department
Anderson Fire Protection District	Grover Beach Fire Department
Aptos/La Selva Fire Department	Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District
Arcadia Fire Department	Hermosa Beach Fire Department
Arcata Fire Protection District	Hesperia Fire Protection District
Arroyo Grande Fire Department	Holtville Fire Department
Atwater Fire Department	La Mesa Fire Department
Auburn Fire Department	Lakeside Fire Protection District
Banning Fire Department	Little Lake Fire Protection District
Borrego Springs Fire Department	Mill Valley Fire Department
Calexico Fire Department	Morro Bay Fire Department
Cambria Fire Department	Murrieta Fire Department
Cameron Park Fire Department	Oroville City Fire Department
Carlsbad Fire Department	Poway Fire & Ambulance Department
City of Del Mar Fire Department	Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District
City of Encinitas Fire Department	Ross Valley Fire Department
City of Piedmont Fire Department	San Diego Fire Department
City of Santee Fire Department	San Gabriel Fire Department
Clearlake Oaks Fire Protection District	San Jacinto Fire Department
Contra Costa County Fire District	San Marcos Fire Department
Crest Forest Fire Protection District	San Miguel Consolidated Fire District
Deer Springs Fire Department	Sonora Fire Department
Diamond Springs/El Dorado Fire District	Sutter County Fire Department
Dixon Fire Department	TwentyNine Palms Fire Department
East County Fire Protection District	Valley Center Fire Protection District
El Cajon Fire Department	Valley of the Moon Fire Department
El Cerrito Fire Department	Waterloo Morada Fire Protection District
El Dorado Hills Fire Protection District	Windsor Fire Protection District

## APPENDIX M

October 27, 1998

Dear Training Officer,

My name is Bob French, a Captain with Bonita Fire Department in San Diego, California. I am completing my 4<sup>th</sup> year in the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFO) at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. To complete the requirements for the EFO graduation I am doing an applied research project on the subject of Executive Development of Fire Officers with moral and ethical character as the main focus.

Could you, or the personnel responsible for training development, answer this questionnaire/survey and return it by November 30, 1998 in the provided stamped/self-addressed envelope?

I thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation in this research project that hopefully will improve the fire service now and in the future.

Sincerely,  
Captain Bob French  
Bonita Fire Department  
4900 Bonita Road  
Bonita, CA 91902

### Fire Officer Development Survey and Questionnaire

*Please rate these words from most important (1) to least important (10) qualities in a fire service leader.  
Do not repeat a number once you have used it. Thank you.*

	<u>Most important</u> (1)										<u>Least important</u> (10)
Loyalty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Truthful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Self-control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Punctual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Tolerant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Ethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Moral integrity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

- Does your department include ethics or moral values during annual training for:  
all personnel?      only those in leadership or command positions?      none?
- Do you believe fire service personnel are perceived by the public to have high ethical and moral integrity?      yes      no
- Do you personally believe ethics or moral values should be mandatory training for all fire service personnel?      yes      no
- Is it important for your Chief Officers, Battalion Chiefs, and Company Officers to have high ethical standards or moral integrity to be effective leaders?  
very important      important      neutral      not very important      does not matter

## APPENDIX N

Dear Fire Service Personnel,

I am conducting a survey of fire department personnel in regards to career development from the Company Officer level and above. This questionnaire will be included in a research project I will be submitting to the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Your participation in this project will greatly assist developing guidelines and standards for career development in departments that currently have no such programs. I would appreciate your help in answering the following questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Captain Bob French  
Bonita Fire Department

### Fire Officer Development Survey and Questionnaire

*Please rate these words from most important (1) to least important (10) qualities in a fire service leader.  
**Do not repeat a number once you have used it. Thank you.***

	<u>Most important</u> (1)					<u>Least important</u> (10)				
Loyalty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Truthful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Self-control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Punctual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Tolerant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Moral integrity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- Does your department include ethics or moral values during annual training for:  
all personnel?      only those in leadership or command positions?      none?
- Do you believe fire service personnel are perceived by the public to have high ethical and moral integrity?      yes      no
- Do you personally believe ethics or moral values should be mandatory training for all fire service personnel?      yes      no
- Is it important for your Chief Officers, Battalion Chiefs, and Company Officers to have high ethical standards or moral integrity to be effective leaders?  
very important      important      neutral      not very important      does not matter